28 September 2004

Louisiana Coastal Area (LCA) Ecosystem Restoration Study

STUDY STATUS

Purpose: To create a plan that identifies the most critical ecological needs; highlights scientific uncertainties; proposes a near-term program of highly cost-effective projects; and develops studies of potentially promising, long-term ecosystem restoration concepts.

Authorized: Initiated in February 1999 under the Louisiana Coastal Area, LA, authority.

Project Area: Coastal Louisiana from the Sabine River to the Louisiana-Mississippi border.

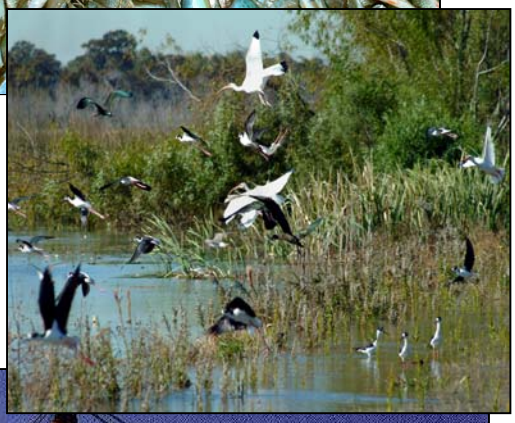
Partnership: LCA is jointly funded and managed on a 50/50 basis by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources.

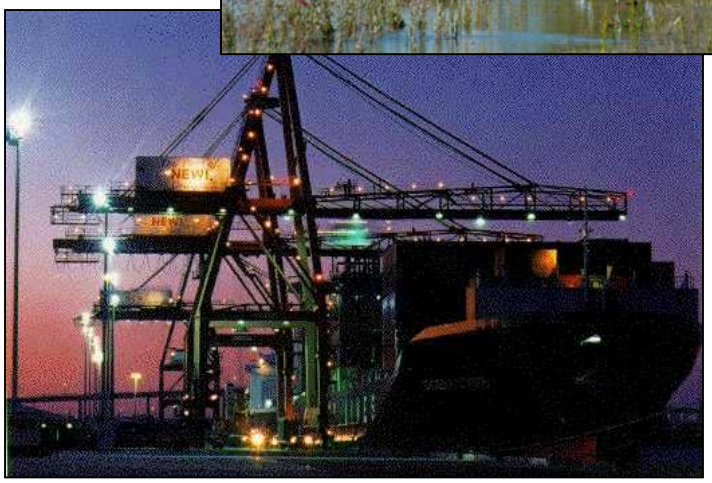
PROBLEM

Coastal Louisiana has lost an average of 34 square miles of land, primarily marsh, per year for the last 50 years. From 1932 to 2000, coastal Louisiana lost 1,900 square miles of land. If nothing is done to stop this land loss, Louisiana could potentially lose approximately 700 square miles of land in the next 50 years.

STRATEGIES

The goal of the LCA Plan is to reverse the current trend of coastal ecosystem degradation. The plan maximizes use of restoration strategies that reintroduce historical flows of river water, nutrients, and sediments to coastal wetlands and that maintain the structural integrity of the coastal ecosystem. Execution of the LCA Plan would make significant progress towards achieving and sustaining a coastal ecosystem that can support and protect the environment, economy, and culture of southern Louisiana and thus, contribute to the economy and well being of the Nation. Benefits to and effects on existing infrastructure, including navigation, hurricane protection, flood control, agricultural lands, and oil and gas production and distribution facilities, were strongly considered in the formulation of coastal restoration plans.





TOP: Louisiana produced more than $300 million in commercial marine fish landings, including shrimp, crab, menhaden and other commercial finfish in 2001. MIDDLE: Coastal Louisiana provides critical stopover habitat for neotropical migratory songbirds, as well as critical habitat for many species of water birds and threatened and endangered species. BOTTOM: Louisiana provides more than 28 percent of the total crude oil and 26 percent of the total natural gas produced in the United States.

US Army Corps of Engineers
New Orleans District

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US Army Corps of Engineers
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100+ Years of Land Change for Coastal Louisiana

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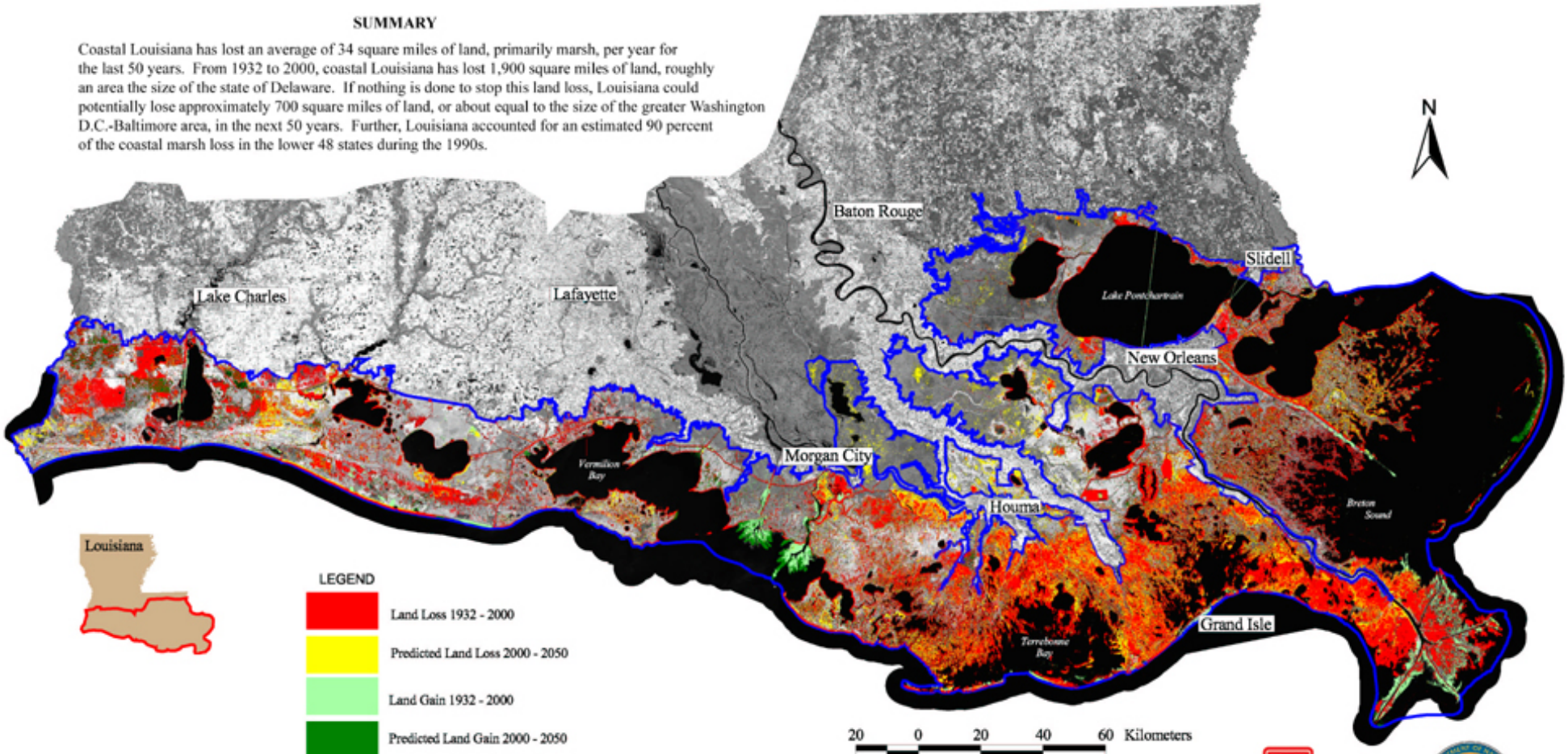
SUMMARY

Coastal Louisiana has lost an average of 34 square miles of land, primarily marsh, per year for the last 50 years. From 1932 to 2000, coastal Louisiana has lost 1,900 square miles of land, roughly an area the size of the state of Delaware. If nothing is done to stop this land loss, Louisiana could potentially lose approximately 700 square miles of land, or about equal to the size of the greater Washington D.C.-Baltimore area, in the next 50 years. Further, Louisiana accounted for an estimated 90 percent of the coastal marsh loss in the lower 48 states during the 1990s.



Background is 2000 Thematic Mapper panchromatic band.

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